

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS (4.3.1)

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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The organization must determine its environmental aspects and then arrive at a list of the most important or significant aspects.

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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There are three distinct requirements:

1. The organization must identify the environmental aspects of its products, services and/or activities.

How does it interact with environment?

There are three distinct requirements:  
(cont.)

2. The organization shall identify the specific aspects that can be controlled, and over which it can be expected to have influence.

Control versus Influence

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There are three distinct requirements:  
(cont.)

3. The organization must arrive at a list of significant aspects based upon the individual impact of each aspect.

Which are the most important?

## Identify Environmental Aspects

### Potential list of environmental aspects:

1. releases of material to the air, water and/or soil;
2. disposal of wastes;
3. energy and natural resource consumption;

## Identify Environmental Aspects (cont.)

### Potential list of environmental aspects:

4. noise levels;
5. transportation and/or storage of materials ;
6. manufacturing processes;
7. etc.

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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The purpose of this step is not to determine the importance of each aspect. The purpose of the step is to develop a complete listing of how the organization interacts with the environment.



# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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The procedure developed must include non routine conditions.

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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The concept of continual improvement must be included. The overall list of environmental aspects can be influenced by future changes in laws, changes in operations, etc.

## Controlled...Influence:

The organization needs to identify which of its environmental aspects that it can control versus those over which it only has influence

## Controlled...Influence: (cont.)

The simple approach here is to only include those over which it has control. However, this might not be enough in all cases. The use of life cycle analysis might be necessary in the design of products.

## Controlled...Influence: (cont.)

This is a “grey” area in the standard.

The procedure that is utilized will need to address this “grey” area.

## Significant Environmental Aspects

The process of arriving at a list of significant environmental aspects must be a reasonable and understandable procedure.

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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## Significant Environmental Aspects (cont.)

The following criteria could be used:

1. perceived risk (human health vs. ecosystem);
2. impact analysis (internal, regional global);
3. probability of occurrence;

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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## Significant Environmental Aspects (cont.)

The following criteria could be used: (cont.)

4. direct or indirect control;
  5. regulated or non-regulated;
  6. resource utilization;
  7. community interest;
  8. etc.
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## Significant Environmental Aspects (cont.)

Utilize the preceding information to develop a risk based matrix that evaluates all the aspects for ranking. The information that is utilized in the matrix should be quantitative in nature, not qualitative.

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## Review Points:

1. Organization must demonstrate that it understands how it interacts with the environment.
2. Explain its position on “control vs. Influence”.

## Review Points: (cont.)

3. Explain how it arrived at significant environmental aspects based upon impacts.
4. Develop a procedure that incorporates the three required steps.

# Environmental Aspects (cont.)

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The procedure describing the establishment of the significant environmental aspects will be audited very closely under the conformance review of ISO 14001.

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